

I am writing to submit testimony regarding the Miscellaneous Firearms Bills that were the subject of today's hearing.

I am a mom of two first graders from Newtown. It has been three months to the day that Adam Lanza massacred 27 of our citizens, and thousands of residents of Newtown are finding it nearly impossible to move on. We are literally traumatized, with many suffering from PTSD-symptoms; even people that were not directly affected. Psychologists still work round the clock to help us appropriately process what happened. Our children are scared. No one should have to go through what we and our surrounding communities have gone through and continue to go through. One mom I know has nightmares of riding in a car with a shooter, the front seat loaded with guns. Instead of driving to Sandy Hook, he turns into the school her children attend, and blasts his way in through the back door...

This is not the America I love. People have the right to bear arms. I don't like it, but I accept it. Just like the minority of gun owners that don't like stricter regulations, but **MUST** accept them for the common good. This isn't about rights. The right to bear arms is not unlimited. This **IS** about public safety, and public health.

According to the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, the annual financial cost of gun violence in the US is \$12 billion. I've heard other estimates putting it much higher, up to \$100 billion. I believe that is a conservative estimate, because the collateral damage, to citizens like those of Newtown, are incalculable, immense, and lifelong. This is not a price we should have to pay for freedom. I have heard **MANY** gun owners state that they are happy to sacrifice some of their rights for a safer America.

CT may have the 4th "toughest" gun laws on the books, but in actuality, due to the NRA's pervasive influence, even the toughest gun laws in America are weak when compared with other civilized nations. We can do better. We must do better.

I believe that the following critical changes to CT law will save many lives:

- 1) Universal background checks for guns **AND** ammunition purchases. We cannot take away guns from criminals or irresponsible gun owners, but we can stop them from using them once they have exhausted their supply of ammunition.
- 2) Introducing stiff penalties for gun trafficking and straw purchasers. Anyone who sells a gun is responsible for where that gun ends up.
- 3) A ban on assault weapons. All assault weapons. With a period of time in which people must comply. These weapons may be in "common" use, but I believe the real question is, should they be in common use? They are only in common use because the NRA has controlled the laws for so long! If the previous assault weapons ban had been renewed when it should have been, these firearms would **NOT** be in common use. They have no place in civilian hands, and most hunters and ranchers, and certainly most law enforcement professionals, agree.
- 4) A ban on high capacity magazines. No one needs them. The apocalypse is not coming. Nor is

communism/fascism/socialism. There is a much greater change that high cap mags will be used for evil purposes than that they will ever be used for "self-defense".

5) Mandatory safe storage. Many shootings occur because the guns of "law-abiding gun owners" were too accessible to the wrong people. Not criminals, per se, but the wrong people. Just because gun owners are law-abiding does not mean they are responsible. We must make sure that they are. No second chances.

6) Mandatory licensing, registration, liability insurance, and firearms safety training for all gun owners. Owning a gun is a responsibility that many will not take seriously unless they are forced.

If these changes are made to CT law, I believe we will see dramatic and immediate improvement in our rates of gun violence.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Killin
Newtown